WHIRRAKEE

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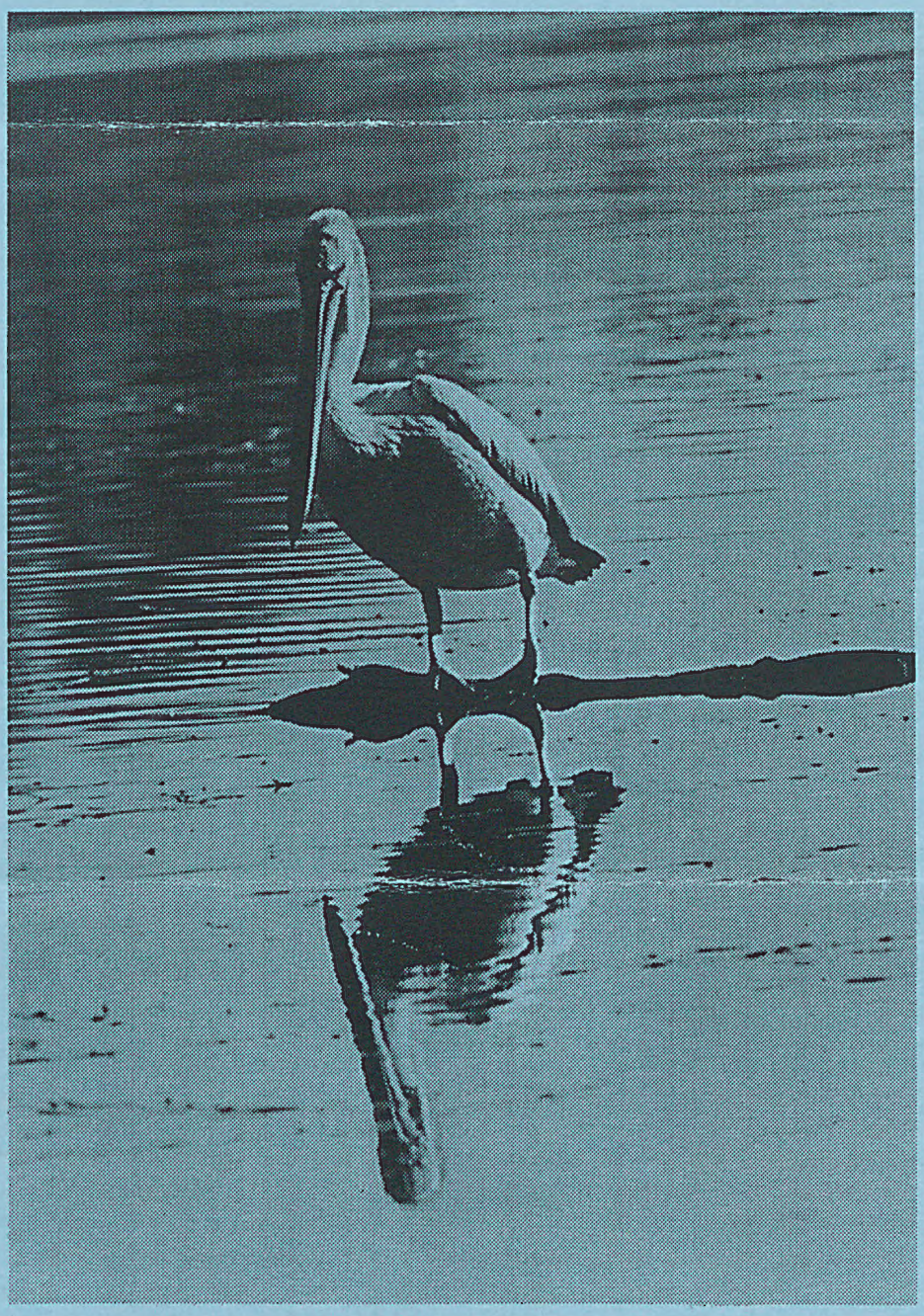

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE BENDIGO FIELD NATURALISTS CLUB

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Address for correspondence: PO Box 396, Bendigo 3552

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Membership of the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club is open to all those interested in Natural History. The subscription rates are: Single $34; Family $40; Concession: Single $28.50; Family $34. *Whirrakee* subscription only is $34. These rates include GST.

General meetings are held on the second Wednesday of each month. The venue for General meetings is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square. Meetings start at 7:30pm and conclude with supper. The Annual Meeting is held in September.

Committee meetings are held on the third Wednesday of each month at 7:30pm. Members of the Committee are the Office Bearers listed above, together with the following members: Darren Green; Maurie Lewis; Kate Lottkowitz; Phil Robertson; Bob Ruddick

Excursions The assembly point for excursions is the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, unless otherwise specified. Full-day excursions normally commence at 10am (usually on a Sunday); half-day excursions normally commence at 2pm and may be either on a Saturday or Sunday. Full-day or half-day excursions are usually held on the weekend following the General Meeting. Campouts are held several times each year, usually coinciding with long weekends or holiday periods.

The Bendigo Field Naturalists Club has one active sub-group:

Mammal Study Group: meets on the fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm in the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building.

Chairman: John Burtonclay, Fadersons Lane, Mandurang (5439 5710)
Secretary: Bill Holsworth, 13 Nabilla Crs., Bendigo (5443 4063)
Equipment Officer: Maurie Lewis (0407 427179)

Front Cover: Photographer: Ian Flecknoe-Brown
The Australian Pelican, *Pelecanus conspicillatus* is a sight to behold (when flying, when landing and when just standing still). If you want to imagine a flock of pterosaurs gliding through the air, a flock of pelicans is apparently quite similar. In Bendigo they occur at Lake Weeroona and Kennington Reservoir quite regularly and people report them frequently on their dams. Their appearance in Central Victoria is probably dependent on the flooding or drought elsewhere in Australia. Pelicans, being top predators, are affected by pesticides and other chemicals in the fish they eat. This can lead to egg-shell thinning. Pelicans breed in colonies and their nests are scrapes on the ground. The young are born naked. One of the most impressive scenes from the series 'Nature of Australia' are the huge numbers of breeding pelicans around Lake Eyre when it filled in the mid 70s. Did anyone see Lake Eyre when it filled last year? Tell us about it.

WHIRRAKEE

Monthly Newsletter of the Bendigo Field Naturalist Club
Vol. 22, No. 4, May 2001

Whirrakee takes its name from the Whirrakee Wattle (*Acacia williamsonii*) which is virtually endemic to the Bendigo region

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Authors are responsible for the accuracy of the information they use and also for any opinions expressed in their articles.
Contributions will be included as soon as possible after they are received, although articles received more than one week after the monthly General Meeting will probably be too late for inclusion in the next issue of *Whirrakee*.
Articles in *Whirrakee* may be reproduced, but permission should be obtained from the Bendigo Field Naturalists Club, and acknowledgment should be given to the author and the Club. Some back issues are still available on request.

Editors' Note

A short edition and a short editors' note. Although adding articles from other sources (e.g. Australian Plants online) is occasionally interesting, it would be much better if we had a few more local, field-naturalist-type articles for the Whirrakee. Please write things down as you come across them and share them with others by sending them in.

Garden Working Bee

Author: Barbara Pelczynska

The next Garden Working Bee to mulch the remainder of area 4 will be on Sunday 27th May 2001 at 9am. The bobcat will start at 10am, which will give us a one hour start to spread the newspapers.

Please mark this date in your calendar and come to help. The more people will come the quicker we will finish and therefore have plenty of time for a long and enjoyable morning tea and friendly chat with friends.

As you have probably noticed, many plants have died in the garden because of the prolonged drought, so in June, and possibly July, they will have to be replaced. It is amazing how well the indigenous plants survive the very harsh conditions. After this very hot summer, the garden, on the whole, still looks good.

Bat Trapping Reprt

by Bill Holsworth

On 28 March 2001 at Lake Weeroona, Bendigo, the Mammal Survey Group prepared to trapped bats at old wooden picnic pavilion, 7-9:30pm. About 70 Club members, visitors and children came to see the bats, have a BBQ tea and learn about bats. Gould's Wattled Bat (*Chalinolubus gouldii*) have been trapped almost every year for the past 13 years (since 1989) using mist nets that partly or completely enclose the pavilion

A short lecture on bat biology was given and the activities of the Club were described for the benefit of the visitors. Many of the visitors were students in Natural Resources Management at BRIT or in Nature Tourism from LaTrobe University (Bendigo).

We were looking forward to a demonstration of the ANABAT sound recording and analysis system that Di Bish from the Bendigo Regional Institute of TAFE brought. Unfortunately no bats move out of the crevice, possibly because of the colder weather. This is the first time we have not caught bats. Next year we plan to conduct the survey exercise in late February or early March.

Bats could be seen in the space between the ridge board and the roof supports at the north end of the pavilion. The nets were taken down at about 9:30 pm. . Last year we caught 5 bats and the year before 12 bats. In 1998 we caught 18 and in 1997 we caught 21..

Records are held by Dr. Holsworth and reported to the Bat Banding Scheme, Australia National Parks and Wildlife Service, Canberra, and the Victorian Department of Naturals Resources and Environment.

PLEASE.....

More people are needed for the next Highway Clean up. Mathew Comer who has taken on the responsibility of coordinating this action needs your support. The last clean up day only just had enough helpers. We do need a bigger pool of people prepared to get out there once or twice a year and clean up this piece of highway for which the Club is responsible.

More people are also needed for the folding of the *Whirrakee*. This takes about one hour on the first Wednesday of the month and is usually all done before dinner time.

The Geckoes of the Bendigo District

Author: Darren Green

Part 2: Marbled Gecko *Christinus marmoratus*

Marbled Geckos are perhaps the most common gecko species found in the Bendigo District. They inhabit all bushlands in the region and may be encountered under a variety of retreats. For example, at Kooyoora they may shelter under granite rock and are predominantly light grey in colour. At Shelbourne-east they reflect the brown colouration of the rocks found in the area, whereas, they may be a dark-grey colour which blends well into the Ironbark of the Whipstick. They also occur at Mt. Alexander, Faugh-A-Ballagh, One Tree Hill, Wellsford Forest, and other forested areas around Bendigo.

The Marbled Gecko varies in colour according to the surroundings. It may be predominantly pale to dark grey or pinkish-brown, with a complex pattern of blackish, fine irregular marbling or with reticulations that tend to form light centred bars. The underside is pale white to pinkish-grey in colour with no reticulated patterns. The body is slender and may reach a snout to vent length of around 70mm (description adapted from Wilson & Knowles 1988, & Cogger 2000). The tail may be as long, and as colourful as the body. Regenerated tails, however, never attain the same length or colouration. Two brittle-shelled eggs are deposited in spring beneath bark and debris at the base of trees or under rocks, with hatching occurring early to mid-summer (Wilson & Knowles 1988).

The Marbled Gecko inhabits a variety of naturally occurring sites, including some artificial shelter sites. Naturally occurring sites include timber; loose bark, cracks, hollows, or disused grub holes of trees, and rocks; underneath rocks or in cracks and crevices. Artificial shelter sites include corrugated iron, stacks of bricks or timber, and other ground debris. They are a familiar sight around suburban houses with wood fires. As a result of purchasing firewood, the Marbled Gecko is often introduced into suburban backyards. During the warmer months they emerge under the cover of darkness to search walls for insects that are invariably attracted to the house lights. One often encounters them walking on vertical glass windows. Their modified digits allow them to grip hold of an otherwise slippery surface. In these conditions, providing cats do not see them first, they may become quite large, and breed more regularly, resulting in the establishment of a small "household" colony. Human dwellings in this instance are favourable.

References

COGGER, H.G. (2000) Reptiles & Amphibians of Australia, 6th edition, New Holland Publishers, Australia.
WILSON, S.K., & KNOWLES, D.G. (1988) Australia's Reptiles; A Photographic Reference to the Terrestrial Reptiles of Australia, Collins Publishers, Australia.

Part 3: Stone Gecko *Diplodactylus vittatus*

The Stone Gecko (or sometimes called the Wood Gecko in certain areas) is unfamiliar to most people, yet when shown a picture, the comment may be "Oh yeah, one of those, I have seen them after all." This comment seems to sum up most peoples observations, they have seen them but failed to see their value and maybe neglected to record their observation. Indeed, they are not found in large numbers around the Bendigo district, and only a few specimens are infrequently observed by the author each year.

The overall body colour of the Stone Gecko varies in shades of brown to grey. They have a pale brown to cream zigzagging vertebral stripe, that commences as a large blotch on the head and ends with a series of blotches on the tail. Several scattered cream coloured spots may occur on the sides. The underside is white. Adults reach a snout to vent length of 50mm. The tail, which, if original, may add another 30mm to the overall length. Primarily terrestrial, the toe pads are only moderately developed, unlike the Marbled Gecko which can walk up vertical surfaces (description adapted from Wilson & Knowles 1988, & Cogger 2000). Little information is known about the reproductive biology of this species,

however females lay two eggs during the breeding season.

The Stone Gecko is usually found by day sheltering beneath stones, fallen bark and timber and ground litter. At night they may be seen foraging for small insects that make up its diet. They generally occupying a wide variety of sparsely vegetated habitats, and have been observed in the Whipstick Forest, Maiden Gully, and Victoria Hill Diggings Reserve. Although considered common across its range, this lizard is not frequently encountered in the Bendigo district and further research is required.

As part of their defensive response, the Stone Gecko will raise its body high on its legs while holding its mouth agape and will lunge at the assailant and attempt to bite if necessary. The tail may rise vertically, and wiggle "cat-like." The defensive response is quickly followed by an attempted escape, after a lunge the gecko may scamper away as soon as the opportunity arises.

With this species, several interesting attributes come to mind. I have came across a single specimen, found under a relatively small rock, with several sloughed skins. This suggests that animals may shelter for several months under the same rock, or perhaps a number of rocks within its home range. Observations of the same rock over the next few years showed no signs of the gecko, other than the previously sloughed skins. I have seen other species of geckos with a slough skin beside them but never has there been more than one. Accumulated skin sloughs of the Stone Gecko have also been observed by Wilson & Knowles (1988), and so its behaviour around Bendigo is not an isolated incident.

They are usually found under small, flat rocks, typically around 100 to 150mm in size and 20 to 50mm thick. Once I found a Stone Gecko under a dark grey piece of slate at the base of a mullock heap at Victoria Hill Diggings. The slate was fully exposed in the sun and hot to touch. This is contrary to what I expected because other geckos prefer cooler shelter sites. According to Wilson & Knowles (1988), the genus *Diplodactylus* has its greatest diversity in semi-arid to arid areas. This suggests that this species is able to withstand the high temperatures experienced over the summer months where shelters may be exposed.

In the Maiden Gully area (close to Balgownie Winery bushland) a Stone Gecko quickly retreated head first down a hole as I lifted a rock. The hole was around 20mm in diameter, and the tail was used to "plug" up the entry. The tail could be plainly seen pressed against the sides of the hole, and upon touching the tail, the gecko retreated further down the hole and out of sight. Utilising its tail in this fashion is not recorded in the available literature, and seems to be an isolated event. Also, retreating down a hole has also not been recorded, but I can imagine that this behaviour might be common if a retreat were available. I assume that the burrow once belonged to a spider. Wolf spiders and other "funnel" or burrowing species are common in the area.

References

COGGER, H.G. (2000) Reptiles & Amphibians of Australia, 6th edition, New Holland Publishers, Australia.
WILSON, S.K., & KNOWLES, D.G. (1988) Australia's Reptiles; A Photographic Reference to the Terrestrial Reptiles of Australia, Collins Publishers, Australia.

April General Meeting
Kirsten Parris: Urban and sububan frogs in the Melbourne region

Author: Sabine Wilkens

Kirsten Parris is currently undertaking post-doctoral studies at the Australian Research Centre of Urban Ecology based at the Melbourne Botanic Gardens. The project has been going for about nine months and its aims are to investigate the distribution of frogs in ponds in urban and suburban gardens in the Melbourne region. Kirsten hopes to determine the effect of urbanisation and habitat fragmentation on Melbourne's frog population ultimately perhaps even being able to suggest changes to present environments to make them more frog-friendly.

Currently, she is still in the survey stage with 115 ponds surveyed last spring. These ponds were situated in a variety of areas ranging from the centre of Melbourne out to the rural fringe. Fifteen species of frogs are expected to be encountered in Melbourne. So far, Kirsten has come across nine. Frogs were found at 60% of her sites and by taking note of the pond and its surrounding, Kirsten already has a good idea of makes good a good and a bad frog environment. For example, bluestone edging, common in many Melbourne ponds presents a challenge to all non-tree frogs...they simply cannot get out of these ponds.

Kirsten then played the calls of several of "her frogs". They were:

- Common Eastern Froglet, *Crinia signifera*
- Beeping Froglet, *C. parinsignifera*
- Ewings Tree Frog, *Litoria ewingii* (this frog is doing very well in Melbourne and is often the only one found in urban ponds)
- Whistling Tree Frog, *Litoria verreauxii*,
- Pobblebonk, *Limnodynastes dumerillii*
- Striped Marsh Frog, *Limnodynastes peronii*
- Spotted Marsh Frog, *L. tasmaniensis*
- Bibron's Toadlet, *Pseudophryne bibroni*
- Southern Toadlet, *P. semimarmorata*
- Growling Grass Frog, *Litoria raniformis*
- Emerald Spotted Tree Frog, *Litoria peronii* (the one with the crossed pupil...)
- Haswell's Froglet,*Paracrinia haswelli*
- Common Spadefoot Toad, *Neobatrachus sudelli*
- Mallee Spadefoot Toad, *Neobatrachus pictus*

Twelve of these are also expected in Bendigo as well as three additional ones that Melbourne does not have.

To do something effective about conservation of frogs in Melbourne or Bendigo or elsewhere, we must have reliable data on their current distribution and habitat requirements (this was also the theme of last month's speaker who talked about barking owls...). The apparent decline of frogs also needs to be studied in greater detail before reasons can be forwarded with any great certainty. However, as for the owls, we can already do a great deal about frog conservation before needing to gather any more information.

- We can rehabilitate existing and create new aquatic habitats.
- We can attempt to eradicate introduced fish, as they consume large proportions of frog eggs. This may be feasible in small, isolated bodies of water but is near impossible in large, connected waterways. Even isolated bodies of water may be quickly re-colonised by fish as e.g. mosquito fish can slither over bare ground in wet weather.

- We can lobby for reduced use of fertilisers, pesticides and herbicides, all of which get washed into water ways and may damage frogs. The surfactants in particular have been shown to interfere with the development of tadpoles. Increased nutrient concentrations in water ways will encourage algal blooms which, in turn, reduce oxygen concentrations in water during their decay.

- We can lobby for further control of pest (cats and dogs eat frogs)

- We can plan to connect existing frog habitats to stop the isolation of small populations of frogs.

John Burtonclay reported on his newly constructed ponds and their success in being colonised by frogs in a very short time. Unlike his dams, the shallower ponds do not have fish in them and this may explain the success of frogs living there. His ponds became frog ponds by themselves as other frogs lived nearby, but this may not always occur automatically. Generally, frogs can be attracted to a new pond by playing their calls from a tape but in general it is illegal to move frogs from one place to another. During her surveys, Kirsten has found frogs from Wilson's Promontory, Ballarat, Mildura and other exotic places all of which would have been brought to Melbourne deliberately or accidentally.

This was an excellent talk, very well delivered, and, judging by the large number of questions, it struck a lot of interest. Kirsten who is from Bendigo originally knew much about the Bendigo frogs and showed great interest in what members reported about their own backyard frogs. Some members are now talking about a frog ponds in the Club's garden. Should this become reality, we might have a good chance in engaging Kirsten's expertise in making this a successful frog pond.

From the Mailbag
Author: Elaine Mathison

Each month the club receives a number of newsletters and magazines: some by subscription and some in exchange for Whirrakee. These are available from the club library.

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THE VICTORIAN NATURALIST(FNCV)
February 2001

"The Potential Impact of Freeways on Native Grassland" looks at the existence of a "road-effect zone" around major roads and freeways, with particular reference to the Melbourne area. The writers present a review of the major ecological impacts of roads and how they may effect native grasslands.

"Buxton Silver Gum Reserve" was set aside in 1978 for the conservation of this rare species, *Eucalyptus crenulata*, known from only two populations. It is confined to a specific and uncommon habitat, in company with other rare species of Pomaderris and Pimelea. The Buxton population may be disadvantaged by the degradation of adjacent sites.

"Yarrow *Achillea Millefolium* L: a Weed Threat to the Flora of the Australian Alps" reports that this exotic species is a potential threat to the native subalpine and alpine plant communities of the Alps. Although Yarrow has been found in Kosciuszko National Park for the past 50 years, it has spread alarmingly during the last decade.

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THE BIRD OBSERVER(BOCA)
April 2001

"A Trip to the (Very) Far North" describes the areas visited and species seen on a trip starting from Cairns and heading north. In addition to a great variety of birds many interesting mammals and reptiles were seen.

"In Search of the Scarlet-chested Parrot" reports on two visits to the arid country around Ceduna in South Australia where this rare species of the dry inland had been seen. The first trip was unsuccessful but two years later, in extreme heat, a small number of birds were found.

"Birds That Nest in Tree-hollows" provides information on the formation of hollows in trees, which birds use hollows and how to tell if a hole is being used.

"Clarkesdale Bird Sanctuary" lies south-west of Ballarat. Over 1000 acres of remnant temperate woodland and revegetated farmland are managed to preserve and encourage the greatest possible diversity of bird life.

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Also received recently:

*Mid-Murray Forest Management Plan(DNRE)

*Victorian Greenhouse Strategy Discussion Paper(DNRE)

*Castlemaine Naturalist(CFNC) April 2001

*Newsletter(Ballarat FNC) April 2001

*Sun-Nat(Sunraysia FNC) April & May 2001

*Geelong Naturalist(GFNC) April 2001

*Field Nats News(FNCV) April 2001

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Red-flowered Acacia to be Released

From: Australian Plants online No 21 March 2001.

A few years ago rumours of the discovery of a red-flowered wattle in Victoria started to emerge (see Australian Plants online, December 1998 issue). However, little follow-up information has been forthcoming. Until now!
The February/March 2001 issue of the trade magazine *Greenworld* reports that the red wattle (a form of *Acacia leprosa*) is to be released commercially next year. Although the original plant in the bush has apparently died, the cultivar was propagated successfully at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne.

The red wattle has been chosen as Victoria's Centenary of Federation floral emblem and will be known as "Scarlet Blaze".

Acacia leprosa grows anything from 3 to 10 metres high. It will be interesting to see what claims are made for the growth habit of the cultivar. However, there are no doubts about the flower colour - it is a deep crimson. You can view excellent photographs of the flowers on the Australian National Botanic Gardens' website.

Register of Significant Stumps

From: Australian Plants online No 21 March 2001.

This idea is a new twist on the "Register of Signicant Trees" that a number of Parks Authorities, local Councils and others have introduced.

The Register of Significant Stumps is an initiative of the Western Australian Forest Alliance and is a "shame file" which documents the destruction of significant trees to illustrate what has been lost.

The idea has lots of potential to be adopted elsewhere.
The following is an extract from the Register.

REGISTER OF SIGNIFICANT STUMPS

TYPE OF TREE: KARRI

WHERE IS IT: SWARBRICK FOREST

WHEN WAS IT DESTROYED:LATE 90's

WHO DESTROYED IT: CALM

CIRCUMFERENCE (breast height).....

.**DIAMETER** (breast height) .....

.**APPROX. AGE (WHEN FELLED)**.....

.**COMMENT**.....

"For those who are actively trying to conserve their local bushland, and
remnant trees, please take a look at this web site:
http://www.wafa.org.au/4photoinf/stumps/regstump.htm

This idea could be adapted by any local conservation group to illustrate the destruction of trees in your area or neighbourhood.

Trees to Combat Salinity

From: Australian Plants online No 21 March 2001. (CSIRO Media Release Thursday, 4 January 2001)

Scientists at the CSIRO believe that planting trees, especially spotted gum, in ancient river beds could combat rising groundwater and salinity in the rice fields of the Murray Irrigation Area. It is believed that suitable land, such as sandy or loam soils in areas with low-salinity groundwater at a depth of 2-3 metres, can be found for tree plantations. In past eras, large streams crossed the region, and the extensive sandy areas are relics of these ancient river beds.

Plantations of spotted gum *Corymbia maculata* may halt rising saline water tables in rice-growing areas.

Currently about 10% (55,000 ha) of the region's land area is under rice and another

40% is under pasture or other crops. Scientists estimate that a total of about 11,000 ha of carefully placed, well-managed spotted gum plantation may help to stop rising water tables in the area.
If trees are planted in sandy or loam soil that allows deep root penetration, they should begin tapping the groundwater within 2 or 3 years of planting. From then on irrigation may be unnecessary, except perhaps an occasional application to flush salt from soil in the trees' root zone.

The best plantation uptake figure for flooded gum (*Eucalyptus grandis)*, a species widely used for farm forestry, was around 300 mm of groundwater a year. Spotted gum (*Corymbia maculata*) did much better, taking up to 600 mm of groundwater per year. Spotted gum apparently has a lot of roots in the capillary fringe just above the watertable.

Introducing the TreeProject

TreeProject, a non-government, non-profit community organisation creates opportunities for people to help restore native bushland in the suburbs as well as in the country, by growing and planting trees.
We promote a better understanding of the importance of retaining and regenerating local native species, and of their crucial role in the soil, water, air and habitat preservation.
By involving Landcare and farm tree groups, state and local governments, schools, clubs and other organisations, we give families and individuals the chance to play an active part in re-establishing healthy ecosystems – and a healthier environment.

How it works: TreeProject works in two ways – urban activities and a city/country link called the Free Tree Scheme.

Around Melbourne we organise and promote community planting days, encouraging members of local community groups to participate. TreeProject helps with site assessment and preparation, species selection, collecting seed and propagating plants. We also assist in the ongoing care of established plantings.
Through our contact network of environmental groups we distribute information, promote each other's activities and celebrate the participation of ordinary people and the extraordinary results they can achieve.
The Free Tree Scheme is about city volunteers growing seedlings for country landholders. TreeProject works with farmers and Landcare groups collecting seed from local rural vegetation then we prepare growers kits and organise distribution to our hundreds of volunteers, who propagate the seed.
The mature seedlings help revegetate degraded farmland – and we're often involved in country plantings. TreeProject links with the rural community generate enormous goodwill, and together we've made a real difference on the land.

What you can do
Join us! We provide opportunities for you to put your concerns about the environment into action. The more support we have through volunteers and memberships, the more we can contribute.
In addition to becoming a financial member, there are many practical ways to help and you can indicate areas that interest you on the application form.
If you become a **volunteer grower** we will register you and contact you when it is time to pick up your growers kit. This will be in November or January. Growers kits contain everything a grower will need: seeds, potting mix, tubes, fertiliser, labels and detailed instructions. Normally seven foam boxes are supplied to grow up to 280 seedlings.
When the seedlings are mature, you can arrange a time fo them to be collected by or delivered to your land holder. You may even be able to join in the planting.

Rather than a grower, you may decide to become a **volunteer planter.** Species selection is one of the most important considerations in any revegetation project. Reasons for plantings may include providing wind shelter, habitat creation, soil stabilisation or shade. Species selection will need to keep these aims in mind.
Rural plantings efforts are currently targeting the Murray-Darling area with an initial focus on the Wimmera area. For activities in these areas full weekend plantings are being organised. Overnight accommodation is sometimes offered by land holders – which may be camping. Urban plantings in the Melbourne area are also organised.Planting days are generally held on weekends. All plantings are done within autumn to spring.

...continued on the bottom of page 10

Bendigo Field Naturalists Club Inc.

Speaker Syllabus for General Meetings 2001– Second Wednesday 8:00 pm

Please check each **WHIRRAKEE** for additional events or changes. If a workshop is planned, it will start at 7:00pm. The speaker will be introduced at 8:00 pm.

Date - 2001	Topic	Speaker
9 May	**The World's Most Successful and Smallest Crustaceans**	**John Neil**, LaTrobe University (Bendigo)
5 June cancelled	**WORLD ENVIRONMENT DAY - SPECIAL PUBLIC LECTURE** **Please Note: This lecture has been cancelled**	
13 June	**Implementing a Landscape Approach to Conservation Management in the Goldfields Bioregion**	**Robert Price**, Manager, Flora and Fauna North West Region, DNRE (Bendigo)
11 July	**Pollen Flora of the Box-Ironbark Forest**	**Katherine Legge and Sabine Wilkens**, LaTrobe University (Bendigo)
8 August	**Managing a Saline Environment: the Success of the Loddon-Murray Community's Irrigation Salinity Management Plans**	**Steve Lottkowitz**, DNRE Bendigo
12 September	***Annual General Meeting***	
10 October	**Wildlife Shelters and Wildlife Rescue**	**Garry Cheers, Wildlife Rescue and Information Network Inc.**
14 November	**The Landscape Approach to Biodiversity**	**Geoff Park**, North Central Catchment Management Authority
12 December	**Christmas Dinner** At the Hall, Bring Salad, Casserole or Desert. Come early, to sit down at 6:30, and visit with friends for as long as you like.	

.....continued from page 9

If you want to be involved in the Treeproject, please phone the TreeProject office on 03 96509477 or email info@treeproject.asn.au. You could also obtain an application form to join from the *Whirrakee* editors (contact address/number is on the inside front cover).

Diary

The General, Bird Observers Group and Mammal Survey Group meetings are held at the Golden Square Senior Citizens Building, Old High Street, Golden Square, unless otherwise indicated.

General Meeting

Wednesday, May 9
Please note: There will **NOT** be a workshop this month. For a prompt start of the talk, you are encouraged to arrive between 7:30pm and 8pm. Club literature will be available for perusal and conversations can be had.

8:00pm: John Neil (Honorary Associate, LaTrobe Univesrity, Bendigo will talk about the world's most successful and smallest crustaceans.

Mammal Study Group

Ring Maurie Lewis for details or confirmation of these excursions and activities (0407427179)

Starting on the first Sunday in May all the nest boxes in Spring Gully Reservoir will be checked again. Maurie Lewis will be in charge of this activity on each Sunday in May and June. They will start at 9.45am and finish by 1 PM. It is expected that 6 to 8 mornings will be required.

Evening Meeting Activities

May 23 Kerrie Norris will lead a discussion on Antechinus biology and ecology.

Supper

The usual arrangements for supper are as follows: members either bring a plate or pay $1 for supper. This small amount is used to reimburse members who purchase essential supper supplies.

Garden Working Bee

The next Garden Working Bee to mulch the remainder of area 4 will be on Sunday 27th May 2001 at 9am. The bobcat will start at 10am, which will give us a one hour start to spread the newspapers.

Please mark this date in your calendar and come to help. The more people will come the quicker we will finish and therefore have plenty of time for a long and enjoyable morning tea and friendly chat with friends.

Other Events

Western Victoria Wildlife Group [RSPCA] - WVWG

12th May, 1.30pm

Geoff Williams, Director of the Australian Platypus Conservatory will talk about the platypus, one of Australia's most intriguing animals.
Meetings of the WVWG are held at the Eureka Vetenary Clinic, Creswick Road, Ballarat.
Starting time is usually 1.30 but may alter a little depending on Geoff's schedule.
Brenda and Gary Cheers (who are members of WVWG) are cordially inviting members of the BFNC to come and listen to what promises to be a most interesting session.
Entry is by donation to cover costs.

If anybody wants further information please ring Brenda on 54612970 closer to May 12.

Wildlife Rescue & Information Network Inc.

W.R.I.N. is an organisation dedicated to the care of orphaned, sick or injured native animals.
It is fully endorsed by the Dept of Natural Resources and Environment.
Please call our Emergency Number for Help for Fauna in Need. Phone: 0419 356433